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March 19, 2004
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NEWS TIPS

BOMBECK FAMILY, WRITERS ACROSS THE NATION TO ATTEND WORKSHOP, DON NOVELLO, NANCY CARTWRIGHT, JILL CONNER BROWNE TO KEYNOTE

Erma Bombeck's family and more than 300 writers from 39 states and three countries will attend the sold-out Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop at the University of Dayton March 25-27. On the eve of the workshop, Bill Bombeck will present awards to winning writers in the annual Erma Bombeck Writing Competition. For information on any of the events, call Tim Bete or Teri Rizvi at (937) 229-3241.

Some of the most noteworthy events for media coverage during the four days include:

7 p.m., Wednesday, March 24: Bill Bombeck presents awards to winners of the annual Erma Bombeck Writing Competition at the Washington-Centerville Public Library, 111 W. Spring Valley Rd. The contest attracted a record 1,200 entries from around the world. Call Georgia Mergler at (937) 433-8091.

Noon, Thursday, March 25: Emmy Award-winning writer Karyl Miller speaks on "Writing Funny For Money in Hollywood — I Was Strong, I Was Invincible, I Was Stupid (Tales from The Mary Tyler Moore Show through The Cosby Show and Beyond)" at the Washington-Centerville Public Library, 111 W. Spring Valley Rd. Miller served as the executive story consultant for Erma Bombeck's "Maggie" sitcom. Call Georgia Mergler at (937) 433-8091.

8:15 p.m., Thursday, March 25: The audience will include women in feather boas and tiaras for *The New York Times*' best-selling author Jill Conner Browne, an enormously popular Southern author who calls herself the "Sweet Potato Queen." Browne is the author of *The Sweet Potato Queens' Big-Ass Cookbook (and Financial Planner)*, *God Save the Sweet Potato Queens* and *The Sweet Potato Queens' Book of Love*. A sitcom pilot based on the adventures of Jill and the Queens, starring Delta Burke, is in development with Warner Bros. A book-signing will follow the talk, which takes place in UD's Kennedy Union Ballroom.

9 a.m., Friday, March 26: Writer/performer Patricia Wynn Brown will offer a hilarious keynote address, "The Roots of Storytelling Inside the Hair Theater Studio," which has been described as stories about women and their intense relationship with hair. Brown developed the piece after a bout with skin cancer. Her work with the Hair Theater Fund provides women and girls suffering from cancer with wigs and hats. She's a three-time winner of the James Thurber "My Life and Hard Times" writing contest. The talk is slated for UD's Kennedy Union Ballroom.

Noon, Friday, March 26: Emmy Award-winning writer Karyl Miller speaks on "Writing Funny For Money in Hollywood—I Was Strong, I Was Invincible, I Was Stupid (Tales from The Mary Tyler Moore Show through The Cosby Show and Beyond)" in UD's Kennedy Union Ballroom. Miller served as the executive story consultant for Erma Bombeck's "Maggie" sitcom.

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8 p.m., Friday, March 26: Writer/actor Don Novello returns to his alma mater after being rejected for California's poet laureate position. Novello, who will speak in UD's Kennedy Union Ballroom, has made rejection an art through his letters from Lazlo Toth. In 1972, Novello created Toth, an enthusiastic letter writer whose facetious missives and their replies were collected in two bestselling books. Novello as Toth has returned with *From Bush to Bush: The Lazlo Toth Letters*, which includes his poet laureate application letter. Novello is best known for playing Father Guido Sarducci — the gossip columnist and rock critic for the Vatican newspaper — on the NBC-TV comedy series, "Saturday Night Live." A book-signing will follow the talk.

9:30 a.m., Saturday, March 27: W. Bruce Cameron, author of the bestseller *8 Simple Rules for Dating My Teenage Daughter*, will offer the keynote address, "How to Go From Being an Unknown Writer to Having a Bestseller and a TV show and All it Takes is 25 Years of Trying." His book was turned into a television sitcom starring the late John Ritter. The address will be in the Kennedy Union Ballroom for all workshop participants.

Noon, Saturday, March 27: Craig Wilson, columnist for *USA Today*, will speak on "I Think I Hear Someone Laughing in Nebraska: The Trials and Tribulations of Writing a National Humor Column" in the Kennedy Union Ballroom. Robert "Mack" McCormack, president of 1st Books, one of the nation's biggest print-on-demand publishers, will announce the two winners of its book proposal contest. Two workshop participants, including one local writer, will each receive \$2,000 in publishing and marketing services for their books.

8 p.m., Saturday, March 27: Nancy Cartwright returns to her hometown and makes her Erma Bombeck Writing Workshop debut. The voice of Bart Simpson, Nancy Cartwright is also the author of *My Life as a 10-Year-Old Boy*. "The Simpsons" is the longest-running prime-time series in history. Having been awarded 18 Emmys, the series is scheduled to run through its 16th season in 2005. A book-signing will follow the talk, which takes place in UD's Kennedy Union Ballroom.

The 2004 Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop is sponsored by the University of Dayton's National Alumni Association, Ohio Humanities Council, 1st Books, National Society of Newspaper Columnists, *Dayton Daily News*, Books & Co., Andrews McMeel Publishing, WHIO-TV, Think TV, Washington-Centerville Public Library, WYSO and Dayton Marriott. Think TV is exploring the production of a 30-minute nationally syndicated documentary, "A Legacy of Laughter." WHIO-TV personalities Jim Baldridge, Cheryl McHenry, Donna Jordan, Scott Dean and Andrew Douglas will emcee portions of workshop events. Ron Rollins, assistant managing editor for features and entertainment, and Mary McCarty, metro columnist, both of the *Dayton Daily News*, will offer workshop sessions.

For more information, see www.humorwriters.org.